

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PILOT OF A NEW STRUCTURE FOR THE TENANCY SERVICES TEAM</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND INVESTMENT</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>MARIANNE UPTON, TENANCY SERVICES MANAGER</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide information to Members about the pilot structure being implemented in Tenancy Services.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Tenancy Services Team worked generically with all Area Housing Officers, Housing Officers and Housing Assistants covering all aspects of housing and estate management for a geographical “patch.”
- 2.2 The team was split into 3 smaller teams splitting the city into north, south and central areas.

## **3. Purpose of the Pilot**

- 3.1 To improve the service to tenants.
- 3.2 The report about the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) highlighted much lower satisfaction among tenants about how Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is managed. This made it very clear that managing ASB needs to be priority, which requires dedicated Officers with enhanced skills and knowledge focussing on it.
- 3.3 To remove the conflicting responsibilities within the team roles. Officers were expected to support tenants to maintain their tenancies and act as enforcers. An example of how this could be a conflict was given in the Housing Ombudsman’s “Spotlight on noise complaints – time to be heard” report relating to whether tenants reporting issues would receive a different level of service from their Housing Officer if they were in arrears and the same Officer was responsible for recovering those arrears.
- 3.4 To respond to feedback from staff that they were trying to manage such a wide variety of tasks, that they were unable to always give them their full attention. So the pilot will enable staff to focus on specific areas of their role and have the capacity to fully manage their work to an even higher standard, rather than needing to respond to all aspects of housing and estate management.

## **4. Pilot Details**

- 4.1 The pilot structure began on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024.
- 4.2 The team remains split into 3 smaller teams – Rents, ASB, and Tenancy and Estate Management. Officers still have geographical “patches” within their specialism so that tenants have a named point of contact when contacting the team.
- 4.3 All staff within the team have remained on their original job description as this is a pilot structure to be reviewed after 6 months. It also allows flexibility to meet the needs of the service as staff can be moved between teams if there are peaks in workload to be managed.
- 4.4 Formal consultation with staff was not required because their job descriptions did not change, and all elements are included in them. There was a 28-day feedback period for staff to provide ideas about how the new structure could work well and express a preference for a specialist area.
- 4.5 There are new email addresses and phone numbers being set up for each area of the team so that tenants can easily contact the right specialist team.
- 4.6 There is a new Housing Officer patch list available in Teams, so that staff and Members can see which Officer is responsible for rents, ASB or tenancy/estate management for each street. Arrangements are being made for paper copies of this list to be provided as needed.
- 4.7 All procedures for the team will be reviewed during the pilot period to maximise the opportunity for service improvements for tenants.
- 4.8 The workload and performance of the team will be monitored closely by the Tenancy Services Manager and the Area Housing Managers during the pilot, so we can demonstrate the benefits it brings.
- 4.9 The review of the pilot will need to be completed by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (6 months).

## **5. Strategic Priorities**

### **5.1 Let's deliver quality housing**

Part of being a social housing tenant is the quality of the service received from the landlord. Tenants need the reassurance that staff responsible for managing their tenancies are well-trained and knowledgeable and can be relied upon to respond to them.

## **6. Organisational Impacts**

### **6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)**

The pilot structure is within existing Establishment for the team so has no financial implications.

## **6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

The pilot does not change the content of the services, just the way it is delivered, but may have implications for the Legal Team if enforcement action for ASB increases. There will be increased pressure on their workload.

## **6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

There are no implications to equality, diversity or Human Rights as it is the same service delivered in a different way.

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

## **7. Risk Implications**

### **7.1 (i) Options Explored**

### **7.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach**

## **8. Recommendation**

8.1 That the content of this report is noted.

8.2 That a further report be presented following the review of the pilot period.

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?** No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?** No

**How many appendices does the report contain?** None

**List of Background Papers:** None

**Lead Officer:**

Marianne Upton, Tenancy Services Manager  
Email address: [marianne.upton@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:marianne.upton@lincoln.gov.uk)